

Think safety first when installing a swimming pool

When the hot summer sun beats down, a swimming pool is very appealing. But because pools also are attractive and potentially dangerous to young children, The Town of Andover's building codes require pools to be fenced and gated, and sometimes equipped with alarms.

If you're considering a swimming pool purchase, contact the Andover Building Department first to determine exactly what permits are needed and what requirements you must follow.

"In-ground and above-ground pools, including inflatable pools holding more than 24 inches of water, must be surrounded by a fence or other barrier at least four feet high," said Andover Building Commissioner Chris Clemente. "Any gates in the fence must be self-closing, self-latching and swing away from the pool area."

If a home's wall serves as part of the swimming pool's barrier, doors with direct access to the pool must be equipped with an audible alarm.

"These codes are in place for a reason," said Clemente. "They are added safety measures to protect you and your guests from swimming pool accidents. As a pool owner, you are responsible for anyone in your pool."

Other things to consider when installing a pool include zoning requirements, electrical clearances and utility easements. Clemente also suggests contacting your insurance agent before installing a swimming pool. Most insurance companies require additional liability coverage.

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